

Dr. Fauci has served for over 20 years as a key advisor to the White House and the Department of Health and Human Services on global AIDS issues, and on initiatives to bolster medical and public health preparedness to fight against emerging threats of infectious disease. He has assisted four Presidents in shaping the research priorities and public health demands of these formidable challenges.

Dr. Fauci has made enormous contributions to basic and clinical research. In 2003, an Institute for Scientific Information study indicated that over 20 years, Dr. Fauci was the 13th most-cited scientist among close to 3 million international authors in all disciplines. He has made seminal contributions to the understanding of the AIDS virus, and he has been instrumental in developing effective therapy strategies for those afflicted with this disease.

Madam Speaker, I can think of no individual more deserving of this recognition than Dr. Fauci. I am pleased to join with my colleagues and a grateful Nation in extending congratulations to Dr. Anthony Fauci for this well-deserved honor and thanking him for his unwavering commitment to scientific discovery and his role in spearheading the efforts to combat disease and undermine the threat of bioterrorism.

THE NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST 2007

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 10, 2007

Mr. CLEAVER. Madam Speaker, I had the privilege, with my colleague, Congresswoman JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, of co-chairing the 55th Annual National Prayer Breakfast, held here in our Nation's Capital on February 2, 2007. This annual gathering is hosted by Members of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives weekly prayer breakfast groups. Once again, we were honored to have the participation of our President and the First Lady and we were inspired by the remarks shared by Dr. Francis Collins.

This year we hosted a gathering of over 3,500 individuals from all walks of life in all 50 States and from many countries around the world. So that all may benefit from this time together, on behalf of the Congressional Committee for the National Prayer Breakfast, I would like to request that a copy of the program and of the transcript of the 2007 proceedings be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD at this time.

55TH NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST—THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2007, HILTON WASHINGTON HOTEL, WASHINGTON, DC

CO-CHAIRS: U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JO ANN DAVIS AND U.S. REPRESENTATIVE EMANUEL CLEAVER, II

U.S. Representative Emanuel Cleaver, II: My name is Emanuel Cleaver, and today my job will deviate slightly from what I do during the week. During the week I serve as the Fifth District Representative of Missouri. I am also a United Methodist pastor. Today I would like for all of you, if you would, to please either get out a checkbook or—(Laughter)

No, I'm serious. In seminary they taught us when you have a crowd this large, you

take up an offering. We may wait—but you don't seem enthusiastic. It is my honor and pleasure to serve today as chair of the 55th National Prayer Breakfast. My co-chair and dear friend, Congresswoman Jo Ann Davis of Virginia, will not be able to join us today, and please keep in mind that if you have a great experience today at this prayer breakfast, it is due in no small part to the work that she has done in preparing for this day. And hopefully she will join us next week with her work in Washington.

One of the basic truths of the Holy Writ is one that all of us can relate to and perhaps are familiar with—you will reap what you sow. You don't plant corn and expect soybeans. You don't plant an apple seed and expect a pear tree. A nation that sows anger will reap bitterness and division. But a nation or a collection of nations that sow love and understanding will reap a harvest of peace. That is what we are doing here today—sowing the seeds of civility in this city, in our country, and in our world. There is nothing more important for us to do. The ground is already covered with weeds and plants of discord. So today we are going to begin to plant flowers. The best way I know to do that is with prayer. If you will, please, put your food down, which you shouldn't have begun to eat—(Laughter)

If you are the person at your table who did wait for the blessing, please express to the others your spiritual superiority. (Laughter) Let us pray.

Almighty and loving God, we are gathered here today from all over the world to say thank you for your love, your grace, your mercy. We confess, God, that our world is not as you intended, and we have contributed to the wrongness of the world because of our own sins and errors. But Lord, we know the truth of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s words, that humankind is "caught in an inescapable network of mutuality." When any of us suffers injustice, we are all diminished. But in the same way, when anyone finds peace, we will all benefit.

Bless, oh Lord, what is said and sung and planted in the hearts of all who share this experience today, that we can make this world more of a garden of your love, and if we are able to do anything good and great from this prayer breakfast today, we're going to give you all of the credit, all the glory and all the honor. In your name and for your sake we pray, Amen.

As the former mayor of Kansas City, Missouri, I know that our cities are the rubber of our democracy, and I also know that there are only a couple of positions in this country superior to serving as mayor—the presidency, obviously, and the Senate, of course. (Laughter)

Of course the Senate.

But serving as a mayor of one of our major cities places us on center stage of the municipal drama. We are very pleased today to have with us, for welcome, the mayor of Washington, D.C., Mayor Adrian Fenty. (Applause)

Mayor Adrian Fenty: Thank you very much, Congressman Cleaver, for your generous introduction and hosting everyone here today. Members of Congress, governors, mayors, religious leaders, President and First Lady, it is appropriate for me as mayor, especially mayor of the District of Columbia, to start out this prayer breakfast. Congressman Cleaver, as a mayor, said it would be okay if I asked you all to say a prayer for me, because it is going to snow today. (Laughter)

Start out by asking that all of our snow plows work here in the District of Columbia.

At a time when we have gathered with so many influential people, I will reflect on one prayer, and that is Solomon's prayer for in-

fluence. When Solomon said to God, make me famous—and all of us politicians and public servants are famous in our own jurisdictions—Solomon said, I want you to spread the fame of my name and give me power and blessings and make me well known. When people read that first passage they say, why would Solomon ask such a self-serving thing? Like all other prayers, you have to read on. Further on in Solomon's prayer, he says to give him these things so that the king may support the widow and the orphans, defend the defenseless, care for the sick, assist the poor, and to speak up for the oppressed, the immigrants and the foreigners.

And while we are all influential and powerful, as we start out this great prayer breakfast, it is important that we remember what influence is supposed to be used for, and the purpose of influence as Solomon taught us is to speak up for those who have no influence.

Let's have a great prayer breakfast and let's use our power for those who need it the most. God bless you. Thank you very much. (Applause)

Rep. Cleaver: Thank you, Mayor, for welcoming us to your city.

It is my pleasure to introduce you to the folks seated here at the head table. All of you cannot follow directions, so—(Laughter) I would really like for you to applaud after all of those at the head table are introduced, but since some of you can't do it, if you would just applaud now. (Applause)

Thank you.

To my left is the Reverend Dan and Kathy Mucci of Glen Burnie, Maryland. My co-chair, Jo Ann Davis, is not here, but she once worked with Pastor Mucci's congregation as the church secretary. He will offer a prayer for the nation in just awhile. You have already met Mayor Fenty. And next to him is the most important person in the room, it is my wife for more than 30 years, Diane Cleaver.

On the other side of the podium here is Dr. Francis Collins, our keynote speaker who I will introduce more fully later. Next to him, representing our nation's governors, many of whom have events just like this in their own states around the country, is Governor Tim Pawlenty of Minnesota. He will be offering a prayer later for world leaders. Next we have one of my distinguished colleagues from the House of Representatives, Allyson Schwartz, who represents the 13th district in Pennsylvania. She will be sharing a reading from the Talmud. Then we have people here from the Lower House, the United States Senate—(Laughter)

Senator Mark Pryor of Arkansas, and Senator Mike Enzi of Wyoming and his spouse Diana. The senators will bring a greeting from their weekly prayer breakfast group, from which this whole event sprang more than 50 years ago.

Finally we have our singer, Nicole Mullen, and her spouse David.

Now join me in thanking the head table. (Applause)

Despite all the awards she has won and all the famous venues that she has performed in, Nicole Mullen just wants to be known as everyday people—it's not going to work, however. The title of her best-selling album is "Everyday People." She has amazing musical talent which she uses with a loving servant's heart all over the world. Ladies and gentlemen, Nicole Mullen (Applause)

(Song: "On My Knees") (Applause)

U.S. Representative Allyson Schwartz: Good morning. I am very pleased to be here and share in this fellowship this morning. I am Congresswoman Allyson Schwartz from the great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. I am pleased to be here this morning. (Applause)

A few Pennsylvanians in the crowd.

I sometimes believe that my first memory was when I was barely 3 and my father left for the Korean War. I can picture my mother, my older brother at 4½, my younger sister at 2, all slightly sad, not really sure why.

But I know that my father's return more than two years later, after serving in an Army MASH unit in Korea, is in fact my own real, first remembrance. I was 5 years old, I was in kindergarten, and my father came to school to get me. I remember seeing him in uniform—how unlikely to see a man in uniform at school. But what I remember most is that I did not recognize him. I didn't know him. I was a little awed, I was a little scared. I remember needing to be reassured by my older brother—who at 6½ was in fact really my older brother—that it was okay, that this man was in fact our dad.

So I know, as I watch families see their dads, and their moms, off to war, that there are tough goodbyes. And there are also the not-so-easy homecomings. That reuniting families is not easy. That our troops come home with experiences separate from their families, some good, and some very difficult. That reuniting, reconnecting, is often hard.

So for the men and women serving and returning from Iraq and Afghanistan who are struggling with changes in their work lives and changes in their home lives, and for all families who have experienced separation or loss, who have experiences that are often not revealed and difficult to communicate, but nonetheless are struggling to be as good as they can be to each other and to their children, I offer a prayer for healing, for overcoming the difficulties, for forgiveness, for feeling connected and whole again.

Today as we offer our public officials our prayers and our support, I offer this reading for all of us. The prayer I will read dates from the Talmudic period and is offered at evening and Sabbath services in synagogues across the world. It is a beautiful prayer for serenity and for protection from danger.

Lord our God, we pray thee that we may lie down this night in peace and awake in the morning to refreshed existence. Spread over us the shelter of thy divine peace and guide us with thy good counsel. Help us for thy name's sake. Be thou at all times our shield and our protector from harm, our guardian against danger, our savior from all manner of trouble and distress. Keep far from us anxiety and sorrow, and shelter us under the shadow of thy wings, for it is in thee alone, oh God, ever gracious and compassionate, that we put our trust. Guard thou our going out and our coming in, that we may live a life of peace now and evermore. Amen. (Applause)

Senator Mark Pryor: My name is Mark Pryor from Arkansas, and this is Mike Enzi from Wyoming, and we bring you greetings from the Senate prayer breakfast. Every Wednesday morning that we are in session, all senators are invited to come to the Senate prayer breakfast. It is a great time of fellowship and we have different faiths and very, very diverse backgrounds that are represented there. It is really a great way, maybe the best way, in the Senate, to get to know each other in a deeper and more meaningful way.

Another thing that we do there is, the chaplain at the beginning of every Congress hands out a prayer card that has all of the names of the senators on there, and he gives us a weekly schedule to pray for our colleagues. And my experience is, that when I am praying for my colleagues by name, any hard feelings, any bitterness, any animosity has a way of just melting away. So, we bring you greetings from the Senate prayer breakfast, and here is Mike.

Senator Michael Enzi: Mark mentioned our weekly prayer breakfasts. I want to tell you

about our global outreach. We are willing to help any parliament or group of elected leaders to start a prayer breakfast. We only participate when we are asked. We send a senator and some prayer supporters to meet anywhere the leaders seek the uniting power of the teachings of Jesus. We have seen prayer groups bring different faiths together. We have seen enemies begin to see each other as people, people with similar problems, problems solvable through the power of God used through leaders. We want to share the care, the reconciliation, the respect and concern that can unite. We want to share the concentration on the 80 percent that we all believe in rather than the 20 percent that divides people. Of course these trips of faith give each senator a gift of faith greater than what we are able to share. May each of you, through the power of God's hand, use your gifts for the betterment of God's world. (Applause)

Rep. Cleaver: Why don't you go ahead and eat. (Laughter)

Lord, bless the food that we are about to receive, and may this food do for our bodies what your Spirit does for our soul. Amen.

We will be back with you shortly. (Breakfast)

Announcer: Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States, and Mrs. Laura Bush. (Applause)

Rev. Daniel Mucci: Good morning, everyone. It is an awesome privilege to be here this morning to lead us in prayer for the leaders of our nation. As I was reflecting on this opportunity to pray, I am reminded of the truth that men should always pray and not give up. For we know what is impossible with men is possible with God. With these thoughts in mind, let us pray for our nation's leaders.

Almighty God, we thank you for the blessing of leadership you have provided to our nation time and time again throughout our history. We thank you for the men and women who offer themselves to serve their fellow man and seek to fulfill the higher purpose of your will here on earth as it is in heaven. For these gifts we express our gratitude.

Thank you for our president, George W. Bush, a man who seeks your face. May your presence go before him, may your peace sustain him, and your power keep him as he fulfills your call to lead our nation during this challenging time. We now lift up President Bush and his Cabinet, the members of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives, the Supreme Court justices, the governors of our states and their respective general assemblies, the mayors of our cities and towns and all those charged with the responsibility to create and enforce the laws of the United States of America.

We unite our hearts in asking that you grant America's leaders the courage to stand together when tested by the winds of adversity—economically, socially, politically, and spiritually—for there is no overcoming without a struggle. So we ask that you would give them your grace to succeed in our quest for peace and progress in our nation.

We also ask that you would grant your servants wisdom to work toward unity when confusion overrides their clarity of vision for the future, for there is no unity without humility. So we humbly ask that you would grant them the mercy and love that they need to recognize and fulfill your purposes in this generation.

We ask for the determination to win the challenging battles we face, to ensure the safety and security of our citizens, and for those who call on us to be partners for democracy and peace, for there is no victory without perseverance. So we ask you to reveal to our leaders the strategic plans for

success, and to supply them with the strength to endure the perils of war.

Please protect the men and women of our military who have placed themselves in harm's way for the ideals of our nation. And finally, with the faith of Abraham, the meekness of Moses, and in the spirit of Jesus of Nazareth, give us all a servant's heart to meet the needs of those who are suffering, from poverty, hunger, or disease, when we have the resources within our influence to relieve the suffering and to bring hope and healing to our fellow human beings. We ask these things in your mighty name, Amen.

General Peter Pace: President and Mrs. Bush, and to all of you here, good morning. I am Pete Pace, and my wife Lynne and I are honored to be here with you this morning. (Applause)

Since the founding of our country, generation after generation of Americans have sacrificed themselves that we might have the freedom to gather here this morning and pray as we see fit to our God. It has been my personal experience that although some may enter battle either not believing or questioning the existence of God, that very few leave battle with any doubt. In fact in my experience, almost the first thing that those who are wounded say is, "oh my God." In answer to their prayer, often the compassion and love of God in the midst of that most difficult of times is brought forward in the form of our chaplains, who risk their own safety to bring God's love and compassion to those who need it. So it is with great respect and appreciation for our chaplains and for their assistance, for their bringing God's love to all of us daily, in battle and out, that I offer this reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians.

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I say it again, rejoice. Everyone should see how unselfish you are. The Lord himself is near. Dismiss all anxiety from your minds. Present your needs to God in every form of prayer and in petitions full of gratitude. Then God's own peace, which is beyond all understanding, will stand guard over your hearts and minds. Finally, my brothers, your thoughts should be wholly directed to all that is true, all that deserves respect, all that is honest, pure, admirable, decent, virtuous, or worthy of praise. Live according to what you have heard, learned, and accept it, what you have heard me say and seen me do. Then will the God of peace be with you." The word of the Lord. (Applause)

Governor Tim Pawlenty: Would you please bow your heads and join me in prayer for world leaders.

Lord, this morning we bow before you with humble hearts, deeply grateful that you are a God powerful enough to form the earth but gentle enough to care for our smallest concerns. You are an amazing God. We know, Lord, that you are the source of all love and that through the course of history you have poured out your love, your mercy and your grace when people have humbled themselves and prayed. It is with this spirit that we come before you this morning. As the light of the world, you have pierced through the darkness in troubled times. Lord, our world struggles. We live in troubled times. We struggle against the forces of darkness. The power of sin and alienation is strong, but you are stronger. Our world needs your healing power and your love.

Today, God, we pray for our world leaders. We pray that the power of your love will guide their decisions. Lord, we pray for your special blessing on those world leaders who are with us today, Prime Minister Musa and President Bush. We also pray for those in this room that will one day lead their nations. Prepare them also, by your grace.

God, as our world leaders face the troubles and enormous challenges of our times, we

pray Solomon-like wisdom for each of them. Touch their hearts. Heal any brokenness.

We pray that each world leader will be guided by your spirit, your leadership. Lord, bless them, teach them, counsel them, continue to love them and hold them in the powerful palm of your hand. May the leaders of this world be led by you every day, in every decision, big and small. You are the hope of the world and the ruler of history. We pray that all world leaders seek first your kingdom and your righteousness. I pray all of this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Rep. Cleaver: As you are continuing to eat your breakfast, I would like to recognize a visiting head of state who joined us today, Prime Minister Said Musa of the nation of Belize. Prime Minister. (Applause)

Thank you so much for being with us.

And while focusing on the room, I want to recognize a historic person in our midst, the first woman Speaker of the United States Congress, Nancy Pelosi of California. (Applause)

Rep. Cleaver: She had to leave. As many of you know, Father Drinan, who served in the House of Representatives, died, and she is going to attend his funeral.

For the Democrats who are in the House, who are in Congress, if you would please let her know that I did introduce her. Committee assignments have not been made. (Laughter)

If I may have your attention once again, we will continue with our program. But first let me share something with you that I read the other day that I hope all of us can remember. William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania, said—and this is extremely important; if you can remember these words, I think it helps this entire nation: "I know of no religion that destroys courtesy, civility, or kindness." William Penn.

In this room today we are a people of over 160 nations and many religious traditions, but a common teaching of all faiths and philosophies is this important word civility.

I came to Washington and to Congress with this desire in my heart, to do what I could to make this a more civil place. In the intensity and tension of this place, it's really hard for me and all of us to follow the biblical teachings to count others as important as ourselves, and as far as it depends on us, we must all seek to live in peace with all.

I have opinions that are as strong as anyone. My challenge is to state them in a tone that raises the level of the conversation and honors those who disagree with me. When you look at the roots of the word "civility," to be civil is to be a citizen, a respected part of the community. So to be uncivil is to fracture the community, locally, nationally, and even internationally, and that is something none of us can afford to do.

With the passing of President Ford recently, I was reminded of a story of his days in the White House. He held regular debates here in Washington with Democratic members of Congress, but most especially with Congressman Thomas Hale Boggs, at the National Press Club. At President Ford's suggestion, they would actually share a cab downtown and pick their topic for debate on the way. Afterwards, they would often go out and eat together.

Mr. President, I am happy you are joining us for our House Democratic retreat later today. It will be good for us and good for the country to break bread together. (Applause)

Remember, we reap what we sow. I think God is pleased when we as citizens of the world, and people of faith, sow courtesy, civility and kindness with each other, and raise up a harvest of grace and peace.

Now, our keynote speaker. Some of us know the song that says, "we are fearfully and wonderfully made." Any of us who stud-

ied human anatomy in junior high biology probably felt more fear than wonder. My biology teachers were always the worst [pause] human beings (Laughter)

But I have grown to respect and appreciate the men and women of science because they unlock the secrets of how we can get more and better life out of these bodies.

Our keynote speaker this morning is one of the heroes of that effort, Dr. Francis Collins, the director of the Human Genome Project. He grew up on a little farm in Shenandoah Valley, Virginia, and now he heads up the most significant scientific project in history. He supervises hundreds of researchers from different disciplines, different institutions and different countries, in the effort to map the human genome and share with the world what it means. And I know the President appreciates this fact—he is ahead of schedule and under budget. (Laughter, Applause)

He has also served as a volunteer doctor in hospitals in developing worlds. Ladies and gentlemen, it is an honor for me to introduce Dr. Francis Collins. (Applause)

Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D.: Thank you for that very kind introduction, Congressman Cleaver.

President Bush, First Lady, heads of state, members of Congress, distinguished guests, I am deeply honored to be speaking with you on this significant and moving occasion. As you have heard, I am not a rock star, as the person who spoke last year, and that's a large leather jacket to step into—(Laughter)

I didn't say anything about the sunglasses.

I am also not a man of the cloth nor am I a political leader. As you've heard, I am a physician and a scientist, here this morning as a private citizen, but who had the incredible privilege of leading the Human Genome Project. I am also a believer in God.

The astrophysicist Robert Jastrow started his book on science and faith with the following words: "When a scientist writes about God, his colleagues assume he is either over the hill or going bonkers." I hope and pray that I am neither of those. And yet in the scientific community there is an unwritten taboo about discussing one's spiritual leanings, so many assume that scientists are generally godless materialists. That's not actually true—a recent survey found that 40% of working scientists believe in a God to whom one may pray in expectation of an answer. And that number has changed very little over the past century.

Yet there are increasingly shrill voices around us who argue that somehow the scientific and spiritual worldviews are incompatible. I am here this morning to tell you that these different ways of finding the truth are not only compatible, but they are wonderfully complementary.

As the leader of the Human Genome Project, I had the great privilege of serving as the project manager for a dedicated team of more than 2,000 scientists from six countries. Together, we determined all three billion letters of the human genome, our own DNA instruction book, and we made all that data freely available on the internet every 24 hours. It is hard to get your mind around how much information this is—three billion is a very big number, even in Washington. (Laughter)

Suppose we decided to take a little time this morning to read the letters of the human genome together, just to express our awe at God's creation. If we could take turns reading, and we would agree to stick to it until we were all done, and we would read at a reasonable pace, A-C-G-T-T-G-C-A-A—there are only four letters in the DNA alphabet, that makes it a little easier but a little monotonous. (Laughter)

If we all decided that was worth doing, and we even decided that we would stay up all

night if it was necessary, we would stay up a lot of nights. We would be here for 31 years. You have all that information inside each cell of your body. And every time that cell divides, it's got to copy the whole thing. Isn't that amazing?

We have learned many interesting things already about this human DNA instruction book, now that we have all those letters. One profound observation—and it is a good one to highlight this morning—is just how alike we all are. Your DNA and mine are 99.9% the same, and that would be true regardless of which one of you I chose for the comparison. So you see, at the DNA level, we really are part of one big worldwide family.

Faced with this rapidly growing body of information, one cannot help but feel a sense of awe at the amazing complexity and elegance of the human body—from the intricate digital DNA code to the marvelous nanotechnology machines that operate inside each cell of our bodies, to that most amazing organ of all, the human brain.

But this exploration of human biology is for many of us not just a sterile academic pursuit. Whether you are a Hindu, a Buddhist, a Muslim, a Jew, a Christian, or still searching, you would probably agree that the mandate to alleviate suffering is one of our highest callings. These new tools of biomedical research, many stemming from this new science of genomics, now provide us with an unprecedented opportunity for breakthroughs in cancer, diabetes, mental illness, infectious diseases, and many other conditions, and a true revolution is getting underway. Though there are legitimate concerns about setting appropriate boundaries for this research, we also have a strong ethical mandate to proceed as quickly as possible, so long as a sick child lives somewhere in the world who could be helped.

So these are exciting times for a scientist. But my hopes and dreams for all of us do not rest solely in science. I am also a man of faith. Many of you probably would assume that this stance stems from childhood training in a particular religious tradition, as that is certainly the way in which many come to believe. But that is not my story.

I was raised, as you heard, on a small farm in Virginia by wonderfully unconventional free-thinking parents who greatly valued learning, literature, music and the arts, but for whom religion was just not that important. As I fell in love with science as a teenager, I also slipped into a worldview that assumed that the only true meaning in the universe was to be found in mathematics and physical laws. And so I became first an agnostic and then an atheist.

But my scientific curiosity eventually led me from chemistry and physics into medicine. And there at the bedside of people with terrible illnesses, matters of life, death and the spirit were no longer academic. Just as it has been said—and General Pace said something very much like this—"there are no atheists in foxholes," I found that there were few atheists lying in hospital beds in this little hospital in North Carolina. One afternoon, a kindly grandmother with only a few weeks to live shared her own faith in Jesus with me, and then asked, "Doctor, what do you believe?" Stammering something about not being quite sure, I fled the room—(Laughter)

I had the disturbing sense that the atheist ice under my feet was cracking, though I wasn't quite sure why. And then suddenly the reason for my disquiet hit me: I was a scientist. I was supposed to make decisions based on evidence. And yet I had never really considered the evidence for and against faith.

Determined to shore up my position, I began to explore the path of others who before me had asked the same questions about

faith. In that search I was particularly affected by the writings of the Oxford scholar C.S. Lewis, who had similarly sought as a young man to defend his atheism and instead became a believer.

As I explored that evidence more deeply, all around me I began to see signposts to something outside of nature that could only be called God. I realized that the scientific method can really only answer questions about HOW things work. It can't answer questions about WHY, and aren't those in fact the most important ones? Why is there something instead of nothing? Why does mathematics work so beautifully to describe nature? Why is the universe so precisely tuned to make life possible? And it is. Why do we humans have a universal sense of right and wrong, and an urge to do what is right, even though we often disagree on how to interpret that calling?

Confronted with these revelations, I realized my own assumption—that faith was the opposite of reason—was incorrect. I should have known better. Scripture defines faith as “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Evidence!

Simultaneously I realized that atheism was in fact the least rational of all the choices. As Chesterton wrote, “Atheism is indeed the most daring of all dogmas, for it is the assertion of a universal negative.”

How could I have had the arrogance to make that assertion?

So I had to accept the plausibility of a powerful force, a creative Mind, that existed outside of nature. But was God only to be found in the abstract, or did he also care about me? I felt an increasing hunger to answer that question.

After searching for two years more, I ultimately found my own answer, in the loving person of Jesus Christ. Here was a man unlike any other. He was humble and kind-hearted. He reached out to those considered lowest in society. He made astounding statements about loving your enemies. And he promised something that no ordinary man should be able to promise—to forgive sins. On top of all that, having assumed all my life that Jesus was just a myth, I was astounded to learn that the evidence for his historical existence was actually overwhelming.

Eventually I concluded the evidence demanded a verdict. And in my 28th year, while hiking in the majestic Cascade mountains in the Pacific Northwest, I could no longer deny my need for forgiveness and my need for new life, and I gave in and became a follower of Jesus. He is now the rock upon which I stand, the source for me of ultimate love, peace, joy, and hope.

But, some of you might say, you're a geneticist. Doesn't this make your head explode? (Laughter)

Aren't there irreconcilable contradictions between your scientific and spiritual worldviews? No. Not at all! As long as one uses a thoughtful approach to interpretation of the meaning of Scripture in light of what science has allowed us to learn about the universe, as St. Augustine compellingly articulated 1600 years ago—I can't identify a single conflict between what I know as a rigorous scientist and what I know as a believer. Not one. Yes, science is the reliable way to understand the natural world. But being a believer allows me to see scientific discoveries in a wholly new light. In that context, science becomes a means not only of discovery, but of worship. When as a scientist I have the great privilege of learning something that no human knew before, as a believer I also have the indescribable experience of having caught a glimpse of God's mind.

Bernard Lonergan captured this aspect of scientific discovery as “the eternal rapture

glimpsed in every Archimedean cry of Eureka.” So if this is all true, why does there seem to be such a battle going on between science and faith, at least in some quarters? As is often the case in such battles, a bit of effort on each side to understand each other would go a long way. Concrete thinkers amongst my own colleagues who deny the value of a spiritual worldview would be well advised to admit the ultimate impoverishment of that perspective given that it offers no answers to questions like “Why am I here?” Perhaps Jesus was thinking of such folks when he said in Matthew 11, verse 25, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.” (Laughter)

On the other hand, some well-meaning believers have adopted the view that science is a threat to faith, and that God has to somehow be defended against scientific conclusions. Is this really compatible with trust in the Almighty, who could hardly be threatened by the efforts of our puny minds to understand his creation? God's creation is majestic, awesome, intricate, and beautiful, and it cannot possibly contradict itself. He is the same God whether you find him in the cathedral or in the laboratory. He is in the laws of physics, but he is also the ultimate source of love and forgiveness.

On June 26, 2000, I had the privilege to stand in the East Room of the White House, next to the President of the United States, announcing the completion of the first draft of the human genome. I was overcome with awe and a sense of history that morning. As a believer, this remarkable book of life did indeed seem to be written in the language in which God spoke life into being.

But that day was also one of personal mourning, for I had just spoken at a memorial service for my sister-in-law, a marionette artist whose wonderful light had been snuffed out much too soon by breast cancer. The promise of these new discoveries about the human genome had come too late for her.

Recalling the mixed emotions of that day, they bring into sharp focus the complex nature of our human condition. We have great hopes for health and long life for ourselves and our families, but all too often we stand at the gravesides of loved ones who have been taken from us much too soon. We find in the great truths of faith the kind of clear spiritual water that we long for, but all too often we see that pure water has been poured into those rusty human vessels, distorted, and discolored. We want to believe in ultimate human goodness, but all too often our hopes are dashed by selfish and violent acts of our own human family against each other. We cling to the promise of new scientific breakthroughs to help our hurting world, but we fear that some of these discoveries may be used in ways that cause more harm than good. All in all, we dream of an earthly garden of delight, but all too often it seems more like a vale of tears.

Yet if we put our trust in God, and resolve to put love above all else, we are promised ultimate victory over all these trials. “Come unto me, all you who are burdened and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

So, my brothers and sisters, from every creed and nation, let us here today resolve to love one another, and to celebrate the beautiful and intricate world that God has given us. Let us agree to protect it, even as we seek to join the power of science with the warm embrace of human compassion to reach out to all those who need healing, whether of body or spirit.

To conclude this homily, I propose to do something risky, to ask you all to join me in singing a song. Some may find it ironic that last year's speaker—(Laughter)

—the rock star Bono, spoke about justice and world economics but passed up the chance to sing. (Laughter)

Now this year's speaker, a scientist who might be considered a bit of a nerd, proposes to sing and even play the guitar. But the Prayer Breakfast is where we are all supposed to break out of our comfort zones. (Laughter)

So please help me—I need it—break out of your own comfort zones and sing along with me. In your program you will find a little card which has three verses of a wonderful hymn. The tune will be familiar to many of you and will be quickly learned by the rest. Harmony is welcome. So my brothers and sisters, lift your hearts and voices with me as we praise the God who is the source of all faith and learning.

(Song: “Praise the Source of Faith and Learning”)

[Words by Rev. Thomas H. Troeger
From Borrowed Light: Hymn Texts, Prayers and Poems

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(To the tune of Hyfrydol)]

Praise the source of faith and learning who
has sparked and stoked the mind

With a passion for discerning how the world
has been designed.

Let the sense of wonder flowing from the
wonders we survey

Keep our faith forever growing and renew
our need to pray.

God of wisdom, we acknowledge that our
science and our art

And the breadth of human knowledge only
partial truth impart.

Far beyond our calculation lies a depth we
cannot sound

Where Your purpose for creation and the
pulse of life are found.

As two currents in a river fight each other's
undertow

Till converging they deliver one coherent
steady flow,

Blend O God our faith and learning till they
carve a single course,

Till they join as one, returning praise and
thanks to You, their Source.

(Applause)

Dr. Collins: Amen. Amen.

Rep. Cleaver: Amen.

Although you do not have a speaking part at today's breakfast, Mrs. Bush, you say more about grace and love just sitting there than most of us could say in an hour. Thank you. (Applause)

Dr. Collins used the words of the New Testament, “Come to me those who labor, those who are tired, those who are weary, and I will give you rest.” The President of the United States has the most difficult job on this planet, and those words should be comforting to him today.

Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States, George W. Bush. (Applause)

President George W. Bush: Thank you all. Thank you very much. Now will you please join me in singing “The Eyes of Texas.” (Laughter)

Good morning. Laura and I are honored to join you here at the 55th National Prayer Breakfast. It is an amazing country, isn't it, when people from all walks of life gather to recognize our dependence on an almighty God, and to ask Him for blessings in our life. I think a breakfast such as this speaks to the true strength of the United States of America. (Applause)

We come from many different faiths, yet we share this profound conviction: We believe that God listens to the voice of His children, and pours His grace upon those who seek Him in prayer.

I appreciate, Mr. Congressman, you and Jo Ann Davis, for leading this prayer breakfast. And thanks for paying tribute to my wife. (Applause)

I appreciate the speaker's presence, Congressman Hoyer's presence, Congressman Blunt's presence. I want to thank all the members of the Senate and the House of Representatives who have joined us. I appreciate the fact that we have governors here, local officials and state officials. I thank the members of my Cabinet for joining us—Don't linger, you've got a job to do. (Laughter)

I thank the military officials who have joined us; distinguished dignitaries. Mr. Prime Minister, we are glad you're here. Thank you for joining us.

I appreciate Dr. Collins. I want to thank Reverend Mucci and his wife Kathy. I appreciate Nicole Mullen. Most of all, thank you all.

We are a nation of prayer. America prays. (Applause)

Each day millions of our citizens bow their heads in silence and solitude, or they offer up prayers in fellowship with others. They pray for themselves, they pray for their families, they pray for their neighbors and their communities. In many congregations and homes across this great land, people also set aside time to pray for our nation and those entrusted with authority, including our elected leaders.

In my travels, I often see hand-printed signs and personal messages from citizens that carry words of prayer. Sometimes it's a single little girl holding up a placard that reads, "Mr. President, be encouraged, you are prayed for." Sometimes it's a banner held by a group of young people that says, "We are praying for you, Mr. President." I often hear similar words when I meet people on a rope line. Isn't that interesting? You're working a rope line and people come up and say, "Mr. President, I am praying for you and your family."

The greatest gift a citizen of this country can give those of us entrusted with political office is to pray for us. And I thank those in our nation who lift all of us up in prayer. (Applause)

Our troops must understand that every day—every day—millions of our citizens lift them up in prayer. (Applause)

We pray for their safety. We pray for their families they have left at home. We pray for those who have been wounded, for their comfort and recovery. We remember those who have been lost, and we pray that their loved ones feel the healing touch of the Almighty. During this time of war, we thank God that we are part of a nation that produces courageous men and women who volunteer to defend us.

Many in our country know the power of prayer. Prayer changes hearts. Prayer changes lives. And prayer makes us a more compassionate and giving people. When we pray, we surrender our will to the Almighty, and open ourselves up to His priorities and His touch. His call to love our neighbors as we would like to be loved ourselves is something that we hear when we pray. And we answer that call by reaching out to feed the hungry and clothe the poor, and aid the widow and the orphan. By helping our brothers and sisters in need, we find our own faith strengthened, and we receive the grace to lead lives of dignity and purpose.

We see this grace in the life of a young American named Shannon Hickey. Shannon was one of Laura's guests at the State of the Union. When Shannon was growing up, her favorite priest was Father Mychal Judge, a chaplain with the New York City Fire Department. Father Mychal helped Shannon and her family through Shannon's struggle with liver disease. On September the 11, 2001,

Father Mychal lost his life in the World Trade Center. In memory of her friend, Shannon founded Mychal's Message, a non-profit organization dedicated to sharing Father Mychal's loving spirit. Over the last five years, Mychal's Message has collected and distributed more than 100,000 needed items to the poor and the homeless. With each gift to the needy, Shannon encloses a card with Father Mychal's personal prayer. It reads, "Lord, take me where You want me to go, let me meet who You want me to meet, tell me what You want me to say, and keep me out of Your way."

Father Mychal's humble prayer reminds us of an eternal truth: In the quiet of prayer, we leave behind our own cares and we take up the cares of the Almighty. And in answering His call to service we find that, in the words of Isaiah, "We will gain new strength. We will run and not get tired. We will walk and not become weary."

And so I thank you for joining us on this day of prayer. I thank you for the tradition you continue here today. And I ask for God's blessings on the United States of America. (Applause)

Rep. Cleaver: Ladies and gentlemen, if you would please remain in your seats while the President and Mrs. Bush leave, and Nicole Mullen will return to the microphone. If all of you would be so kind as to remain in your seats until I tell you to leave. (Laughter)

Ms. Mullen: I wrote a song based on the words of Job, who had gone from hardship and back to goodness again. He simply said, "I know that my redeemer lives."

(Song: Redeemer) (Applause)

Rep. Cleaver: Amen.

Amen. He does live. Thank you so much, Nicole. Thank you for blessing us.

As we prepare to leave this place today, I would remind you that years ago the prophet Isaiah gave us the word of the Lord when he wrote:

"Stop doing wrong, learn to do right. Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow. 'Come now, let us reason together,' says the Lord."

As the light of the world, you pierce the darkness in troubled times, those of you who are leaders both in this country and around the world. Please know that we all struggle against the forces of darkness. The power of sin and alienation is strong, but you are now stronger. Our world needs your healing power and your love.

Today, oh God, I pray for our world leaders. I pray that the power of your love will guide their decisions.

And now, we ask that you go out into the world and make a difference. Amen. (Applause)

PAYING TRIBUTE TO PHILLIP THORNWELL HENRY

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 17, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of my dear friend Phillip Thornwell Henry.

Throughout his life, Phil was dedicated to enriching the lives of those around him. Phil was born in Roanoke County, Virginia and attended Cave Spring High School and subsequently earned a degree from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in civil engineering. As a civil engineer, Phil sought to improve the quality of life of others and began

his long and illustrious career by working for the Corps of Engineers in West Virginia. After the birth of his two sons, Phil and his young family moved to Martinsville, Virginia where he worked as the City Engineer and Superintendent of Water Resources for 11 years.

In 1984, Phil and his family moved to Boulder City, Nevada where he became the City Engineer. Two years later, Phil moved back to his native Virginia, where he worked as the county engineer in Roanoke before returning to Boulder City in 1991. In 1995, Phil was promoted to Director of Public Works in Boulder City. During his tenure as Director, Phil oversaw many projects, such as the extension of Adams Boulevard, the creation of Memorial Park and Boulder Creek Golf Course and the expansion of the Boulder City Cemetery. In 2005, Phil retired from his life of public service in engineering and moved back to Roanoke. In addition to his numerous professional achievements, Phil was an active member of the community.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor the life and legacy of my friend, Phil Thornwell Henry. He greatly enriched countless lives in both Nevada and Virginia and he will be greatly missed by all whose lives he touched.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 17, 2007

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, on Monday, September 10, 2007 I missed roll call votes Nos. 865 and 866. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on H. Res. 257 and "aye" on H. Res. 643.

CAMERON ELIZABETH ETHERIDGE MAKES HER MARK ON THE WORLD

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 17, 2007

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my son Brian and his wife Meredith on the birth of their second child, Cameron Elizabeth Etheridge. Cameron was born on my birthday Tuesday, August 7, 2007 and weighed 8 pounds and 8 ounces and was 21 inches long. My wife Faye and I are excited about the birth of our third grandchild, and she joins me in wishing Brian and Meredith and their daughter, Virginia, great happiness upon this new addition to our family.

Faye and I are truly blessed by the arrival of Cameron Elizabeth Etheridge. The birth of a new child is a joyous occasion that reminds us of the promise of a new life. And I know that Virginia is excited to have a sister with whom she can play. Children remind us of the incredible miracle of life, and they keep us young-at-heart. Every day they show us a new way to view the world.

God has truly blessed my family with this new addition. My family and I are looking forward to spending a lot of time with our new bundle of joy and introducing her to all of our friends and neighbors in North Carolina's Second Congressional District.